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IN THE CLAIMS:

1 - 5. (Cancel).

6. (currently amended) ~~The method of claim 8 wherein~~ A method of introducing in-band network management packets in a network comprising steps of:
constructing a packet including a header;
inserting a predetermined code in a field in the header; and
determining whether the packet includes an in-band network management packet,
or a user packet using the predetermined code,
wherein
the constructed packet is a multi-protocol label switching packet, and
the field for inserting the predetermined code is a time-to-live field.

7. (previously presented) The method of claim 6, wherein the predetermined code is a one-bit code.

8 - 12. (Cancel)

13. (currently amended) ~~The method of claim 12, wherein~~ A method of introducing in-band network management packets in a multi-protocol label switching network, comprising a step of:
determining whether a packet is an in-band network management packet or a user packet by predetermined code to distinguish an in-band network management packet from a user packet; where
the packet includes a shim header and the predetermined code is inserted in an experimental field located in the shim header.

14. (previously presented) currently amended) ~~The method of claim 12, wherein~~ A method of introducing in-band network management packets in a multi-protocol label switching network, comprising a step of:

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determining whether a packet is an in-band network management packet or a user packet by predetermined code to distinguish an in-band network management packet from a user packet; where

the packet includes a shim header and the predetermined code is inserted in a time-to-live field located in the shim header.

15 - 21. (Cancel).

22. (previously presented) A network comprising:

an originating router constructing an in-band network management packet; and
a receiving router that receives a packet and determines whether the packet is an

in-band network management packet or a user packet;

wherein

the originating router inserts a predetermined code in a header in the in-band network management packet, and the predetermined code identifies an in-band network management packet, and

the header includes a shim header, and the predetermined code is inserted in a time-to-live field in the shim header.

23 - 34. (Cancel).

35. (currently amended) A router comprising:

reception circuitry that receives an incoming packet; and

processing circuitry that identifies a predetermined code and determines whether the incoming packet is an in-band network management packet or a user packet using the predetermined code, wherein the processing circuitry identifies the predetermined code from a time-to-live field in a shim header of the received packet.

36 - 45. (Cancel).